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score at ballparks**

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**Technology improves
natural gas efficiency**

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**Still sizzles
983 spark**

Florence Fabricant/Page 8

Nation's Restaurant News[®]

The Weekly Newspaper of the Food-Service Industry

SECOND CLASS

Vol. 23, No. 14

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April 3, 1989

House passes measure to hike minimum wage

Rejects Bush proposal despite threat of veto

By Ken Rankin

WASHINGTON — House Democrats put Congress on a collision course with the White House by passing legislation to raise the minimum wage to \$4.55.

Although the House-passed bill was amended to include a

watered-down version of the "training wage" provision favored by the food-service industry, the legislation drew an icy response from top Bush administration officials.

Noting that the president had agreed to support an increase in the wage floor to

\$4.25 "and no higher," Labor Secretary Elizabeth Dole said that if the Senate minimum-wage bill mirrors the House measure, she will recommend a veto.

Although the House approved the legislation by a (See **MINIMUM WAGE**, page 4)

THE HOUSE'S WAGE HIKE BILL

(Increases would begin in October and follow annually through 1990)



Source: NRN research



NRN Photo

Patrick Terrail in the skylit dining room of Ma Maison.

Ma Maison tradition revived at new address

By Richard Martin

LOS ANGELES — Patrick Terrail, founder of the world-famous Ma Maison bistro, mastered the Hollywood restaurant game and for a time enjoyed a virtual monopoly as Tinseltown's "power" dining mogul.

Now, in the best tradition of Monopoly, the legendary restaurateur has parlayed his "house" (Ma Maison is French for "my house") on Melrose Avenue into a hotel on Beverly Boulevard.

The original restaurant

closed in 1985 after a 13-year run that propelled the careers of Wolfgang Puck and scores of other gifted chefs and managers. Terrail opened the "new" Ma Maison restaurant in December as part of the \$52 million Ma Maison Sofitel hotel, which is managed by the Paris-based Sofitel group.

No longer the restaurant's owner, Terrail sold the rights to Ma Maison years ago and works now as the hotel's food and beverage director. (See **MA MAISON**, page 71)

Food scares prompt operators to study supply, prep methods

By Milford Prewitt

Highly publicized food scares are rekindling attention to food safety, prodding some operators to re-examine their methods of food procurement and preparation.

The old fears about pollution and pesticides temporarily faded in the background as a series of new alarms took center stage: cyanide-laced imported Chilean grapes, alleged cancer-causing ripening

**Call NRN Hotline to
speak out on food safety
Page 72**

**Inquiring photographer
asks about mandatory
seafood inspection
Page 69**

agents in apples, and potato preservatives that disrupt the nervous system.

The Chilean grape scare introduced a new term, "food terrorism," while both Newsweek and Time rushed forward with nearly identical cover stories asking, "How Safe Is Your Food?"

The school districts of New York City, Chicago, Los Angeles, Dallas, and other areas temporarily removed apples from their inventories and menus following reports that a (See **OPERATORS**, page 71)

In-flight feeders fuming over TV ad Car spot stereotypes fare

By Bill Carlino

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — A satirical TV commercial for National Car Rental that includes a parody of airline cuisine has outraged in-flight feeding contractors.

The controversial spot, created by Chiat/Day, New York, promotes National's Emerald Aisle travel card, a service that expedites the logjam usually associated with car-rental procedures.

However, it was the commercial's mechanized stereotype of airline feeding that prompted Phil Cook, executive administrator of the 350-member In-Flight Food-Service Association based here, to draft a letter to National Car Rental president Vince Wasik.

"We realize that food-service companies are an easy target, but we resent being used as a punch- (See **AIRLINE FEEDERS**, page 71)

FOOD WATCH

'50s fare with flair

CHICAGO — The menu at Hopper's Dining Car in Chicago, the Levy Restaurants' updated interpretation of an old-fashioned diner, lists all the standards of a 1950s menu: meat loaf, macaroni and cheese, and milk shakes.

It becomes apparent that this sophisticated outpost in North Michigan Avenue's classiest shopping mall is not a 1950s throwback when one reads the gourmet ingredients of these classic homespun favorites. The meat loaf is made with veal and accompanied by leeks, shiitake mushrooms, and a crisp potato pancake (\$8.95), and the macaroni comes with not one, but four cheeses — Fontina, Asiago, Bel Paese, and Gorgonzola (\$7.90).

From the fountain the expected milk (See **HOPPER'S**, page 71)

CHARLES BERNSTEIN ON THE ULTIMATE VICTIM: THE 'LITTLE GUY' — F3

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NEWS DIGEST

Ramada inks deal to sell Callender's to NY investors

PHOENIX, Ariz. — Ramada Corp. has struck a definitive pact to sell its 152-unit Marie Callender Pie Shop chain to Wilshire Restaurant Group, a new corporation formed by the New York-based investment firms Hayes Financial Corp. and Hampton Ventures Inc.

The sale price and terms were not disclosed pending the deal's anticipated closing this month. In 1986 Ramada paid \$57 million and 2.5 million shares for the chain.

Michael Hayes, a principal of Hayes Financial, said Marie Callender's management team, headed by Ramada veteran Tom Martin, is expected to remain intact at the chain's Orange, Calif., headquarters. Martin would report to Steven Shulman, the chairman of Wilshire Restaurant Group.

The proceeds and those from the planned sale of Ramada's hotel division by midyear would fund a dividend of at least \$7 a share, which was offered to defuse a takeover bid by Chicago's Pritzker family. Under the Ramada board's restructuring plan, current management loses the Ramada brand but retains the Phoenix-based company's lucrative gaming division.

TW stockholders withdraw shares offered to Coniston

NEW YORK — Stockholders of TW Services, the food-service giant striving to evade a takeover by Coniston Partners, have handed Coniston a setback by withdrawing 16.6 million of the more than 32.2 million shares they had tendered to the raider.

The withdrawal bolsters TW's chances of winning an anticipated proxy battle at its shareholders meeting later this month. Coniston has notified government regulators that it plans to seek two seats on TW's board of directors.

Meanwhile, Gerald Schwartz, chief executive of Onex Corp., told Dow Jones News Service that the company might tender a bid for TW's Canteen Corp. contract-feeding subsidiary. Onex operates Sky Chefs, an in-flight caterer. Several years ago, in an earlier incarnation, TW escaped a hostile bid by selling one of its businesses.

Coniston had amassed a 19-percent stake in TW before launching its \$29-per-share, \$1.4 billion tender offer last fall. At one point Coniston stated that tendered stock, combined with its holdings, amounted to more than 90 percent of total TW shares outstanding.

In extending the deadline for the tender offer, Coniston recently disclosed that the stock it held or could buy amounted to 49 percent of total shares outstanding.

Stockholders apparently withdrew tendered shares after TW disclosed that it had retained an advisor to evaluate such alternatives as selling all or part of the company to a "white knight."

Soviet chefs' delay fuels reports that Moscow's edgy

EDMONDS, Wash. — A group of Soviet chefs expected to arrive here as part of a grassroots goodwill exchange was overdue late last month, spurring some speculation that they were being delayed because of the controversy surrounding free-enterprise "cooperative" restaurants in the Soviet Union.

Unlike the Soviet food-service representatives who garnered headlines when they visited the United States earlier this year, the chefs expected here work in privately owned cooperatives.

Speculation that the chefs were being intentionally delayed centered around the idea that conservative communist party members might be concerned about the high visibility of the first band of cooperative chefs and owners to visit the United States.

Jerilyn Brusseau, founder of Peace Table, the American group that initiated the exchange, said the chefs, originally due March 3, had not arrived as of March 23. American members of Peace Table worked in Soviet restaurants and stayed in private homes during a tour in January, she said.

NY hunts water waste in city's restaurants

NEW YORK — City Hall said it is cracking down on water wastage in restaurants here to ease what is anticipated to be one of the Big Apple's worst droughts.

Inspectors have been instructed to enforce more diligently an ordinance that prohibits restaurants from providing patrons with unsolicited glasses of water. Violators will be fined \$100 for each infraction, officials said. Businesses can also be fined for leaky faucets. In addition, as part of a "drought emergency" declared by Mayor Koch, each dining place will be required to slash its water consumption by at least 20 percent. Businesses are expected to select their own means of conservation.

Baskin-Robbins taps Savel for president's position

GLENDAL, Calif. — Baskin-Robbins, the 2,500-unit chain of ice-cream dipping stores, has named William Savel to the new position of president and chief executive.

James Earnhardt, president of Baskin-Robbins USA, and Michael Cohn, the head of international operations, will retain their former duties but will report to Savel. Savel, 55, was previously president of Peter Paul Cadbury USA, a candy bar maker.

Aoki taps chmn., wife for top Westin slots

SEATTLE — Aoki Corp. said its chairman, John Aoki, and his wife, Chieko Aoki, have succeeded Harry Mulliken as chairman and chief executive, respectively, of Westin Hotels, the luxury chain acquired by Aoki Corp. last year for \$1.35 billion.

Chieko Aoki will also assume Westin's new post of deputy chairwoman, reporting to her husband. She has served as director of sales and marketing for Caesar Park Hotels, a chain in Brazil, and has studied at Cornell University's school of hotel administration. Aoki said Mulliken, a 48-year veteran of Westin, is retiring. He is 62 years old.

Hemingway and Crisman shutter ill-fated Zemos

MIAMI — Mariel Hemingway and Steve Crisman, operators of the popular Sam's restaurants in New York, have closed their Zemos food-service venture here less than two months after swinging open the doors.

Zemos was an effort by the husband-and-wife team to branch beyond the Sam's concept. However, local sources said, the operators underestimated local competition. Crisman's brother, Eric, is a partner in the restaurant. The place opened in January.

Lafayette promotes Simon to baking post

NEW YORK — Restaurant Lafayette, the acclaimed restaurant of the Drake Hotel here, has promoted Kerry Simon to pastry chef. Simon, previously sous chef at Lafayette, has also worked in the kitchens of such distinguished New York restaurants as Lutèce, La Cote Basque, and Cafe Greco. Lafayette is one of the city's highest-rated restaurants.

Note to readers:

Nation's Restaurant News readers looking for the Financial News department will find it in a new location beginning this week — after the Food and Marketing pages.

The move also follows the introduction of two new features on the Financial News page — Fact File, a graphic look at the statistics shaping the industry, and Food Price Outlook, a weekly survey of commodities costs. The location of the Stock Market Tables page remains unchanged.

FINANCIAL NEWS

ShowBiz flexes independence in bid to rejuvenate Monterey

By Peter Romeo

IRVING, Texas — Armed with new management and a bushel of cash, ShowBiz Pizza

News Analysis

Time Inc. is spending its first year of independence in a quest for a greater share of Houston's fiercely competitive Mexican dinner-house market.

The company, operator of the ShowBiz and Chuck E. Cheese pizza chains, was spun off in December from Integra, an innkeeper here formerly known as Brock Hotel Corp. Integra's stockholders were issued about four ShowBiz shares for every 10 Integra units they held. In the course of the divestiture, ShowBiz paid Integra \$11 million for Monterey House, a wheezing Mexican chain with 31 of its 58 units in Houston.

ShowBiz is wagering that it can restore Monterey to profitability by broadening the concept's current market base of blue-collar, low-income adults. To bring more families into the fold, the company plans to expand Monterey's menu, modernize furniture and fixtures, and literally cast dining rooms in a new light.

"We're popping in windows to brighten the dining rooms," explained ShowBiz chairman and chief executive Richard Frank. "The restaurants are old and dark. The chain was bankrupt when Integra bought it [in 1987] and hadn't been renovated in a long time."

Seemingly slight but fundamental alterations, he pointed out, have yielded 12 consecutive quarters of real sales growth for the ShowBiz and Chuck E. Cheese chains, which both looked like goners in the mid-1980s. Chuck E. Cheese was bankrupt when ShowBiz acquired it, and the ShowBiz system dragged its parent to the brink of insolvency in 1986.

Today the two systems' sales make ShowBiz the na-



The management team of ShowBiz Pizza Time Inc. consists of: seated, from left, Matthew P. Drennan, Ronald F. Saupe, Richard T. Huston. Standing, from left, are J. Terry Spaight, Richard M. Frank, Michael H. Magusiak.

tion's seventh-largest pizza operator. The two chains encompass 265 units.

"You will see Monterey return to profitability probably in the third or fourth quarter of 1989," Frank declared.

A resurrection of Monterey would no doubt snare more attention from Wall Street, which, according to Frank, failed to appreciate ShowBiz's sales and profit potential while the operation was part of Integra.

"One of the reasons for the spin-off was that investors didn't seem to understand us," he said. "They didn't value us for what we were." Yet in 1987 ShowBiz's revenues of \$125.9 million accounted for 66 percent of Integra's sales, and the restaurant division's operating income of \$6.1 million enabled the parent company to post net earnings of \$5.1 million.

As a result of the spin-off, "the profitability of the restaurants won't be obscured by [Integra's] hotel losses," Marlene Lundberg, an analyst for the Value Line financial advisory service, noted in a recent report.

Integra also opted to divest itself of the restaurant operations "because there was very little synergy between its ho-

tels and ShowBiz," Frank explained. The two divisions were operated as completely separate businesses, each with its own operational staffs.

In preparation for the split, Frank assembled a new administrative team for ShowBiz. Terry Spaight, an associate of Frank's during his long tenure at Steak and Ale, was recruited from the steakhouse chain to become ShowBiz's president and chief operating officer. Industry veteran Matthew Drennan was tapped for the post of executive vice president and director of operations for Monterey, and Michael Magusiak was appointed chief financial officer.

The new hires joined executive vice president and marketing director Richard Huston, who joined ShowBiz several years ago from the El Chico Mexican restaurant chain. Executive vice president and general counsel Ronald Saupe was recruited from the Chili's dinner-house chain in 1986.

The revamped team plans to focus its energies during 1989 on overhauling all 31 Monterey Houses in Houston.

Two Monterey units were renovated elsewhere in Texas (See **SHOWBIZ**, page 70)

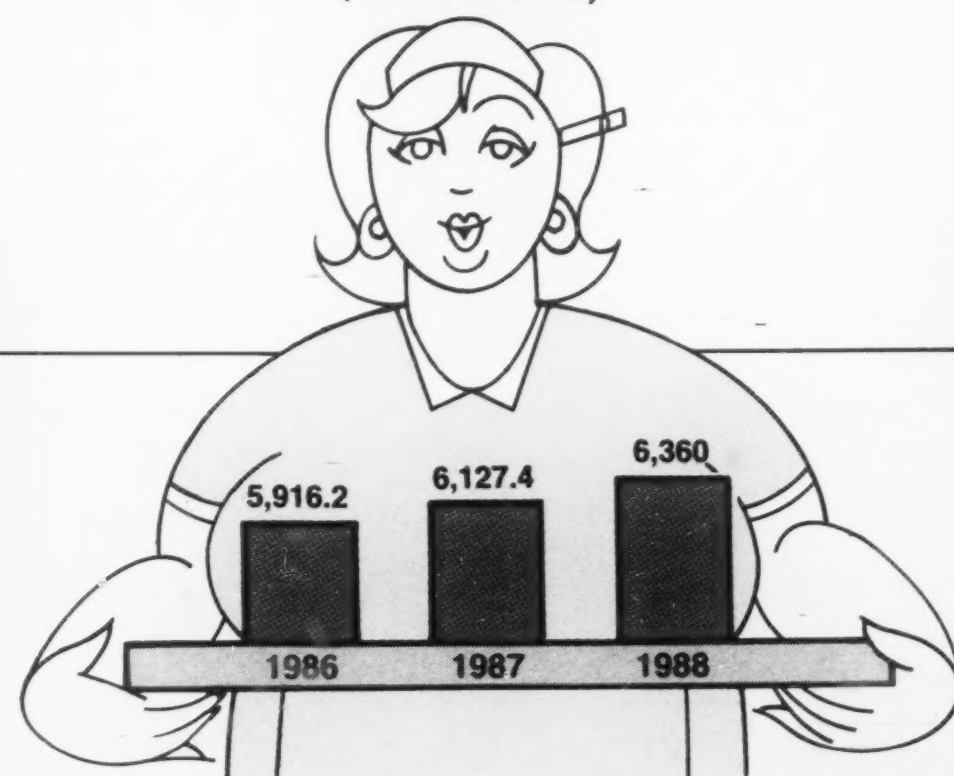
FACT FILE

A look at the statistics shaping the industry

EMPLOYMENT AT EATING AND DRINKING PLACES RISES

Employment at the nation's restaurants and bars totaled nearly 6.4 million in 1988, outstripping the 1987 figure by 3.8 percent. Last year's rate of gain was higher by 0.2 percentage points than that of each of the two prior years.

(in thousands)



Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. Data is for civilian population, unadjusted.

NRN FINANCIAL DIGEST

Famous to buy 11 Imasco properties

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. — Famous Restaurants Inc. said it has signed a letter of intent to acquire 11 Casa Lupita restaurants from Imasco USA Inc., operator of the 3,100-unit Hardee's system.

Terms of the deal, which is scheduled to close in late this month or May, were not disclosed.

Famous, which operates and franchises 41 Garcia's Mexican restaurants and two Famous Fish Co. restaurants, said that if the deal closed, Famous would continue to operate nine of the new restaurants as Casa Lupitas and convert two — both in Seattle — to Garcia's. Four Garcia's are already in operation in Seattle.

The sale would leave Rocky Mount, N.C.-based Imasco USA — a subsidiary of Montreal-based Imasco Ltd. — with about six Casa Lupitas.

Imasco had earlier indicated that its Grisanti's restaurant division was on the block.

General Mills up 24% in net income

ORLANDO, Fla. — A 63-percent year-to-year surge in restaurant operating profits buoyed General Mills' net income for the third quarter ended Feb. 26 to \$82.3 million, bettering the year-ago watermark by 24 percent.

Sales at the conglomerate's Red Lobster and Olive Garden dinner houses surpassed the year-earlier figure by 33 percent. General Mills attributed the gains in part to having 105 more restaurants in operation than it did during the comparable period in fiscal 1987. On Feb. 26, General Mills had 610 dinner houses, including 20 opened during the prior three months.

In addition, sales at established Red Lobsters increased year-to-year by an average of 14 percent, and the per-unit mean for the Olive Garden division increased 6 percent, the company said.

General Mills, which is also one of the world's largest sellers of breakfast cereals, said its corporate revenues increased 17 percent for the quarter, to \$1.45 billion, from year-ago figures.

TCBY's profits climb 96% for 1st Q

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. — TCBY Enterprises Inc. said net income for its first quarter rose 96 percent, to \$2.9 million, on a 74-percent year-to-year rise in revenue, to \$23.4 million.

Sales from new units and a 16-percent rise in same-store sales drove the improvements, the company said. Systemwide sales increased 77 percent for the first quarter, to \$46 million, it indicated.

TCBY added 65 stores during the quarter, bringing its total to 1,240. At the end of the prior year's first quarter, 874 frozen yogurt stores were open.

Favorable weather in December and January and increased brand awareness contributed to the strong same-store sales gains, the company said.

FOOD PRICE OUTLOOK

Chilean fruit, apple scares ease

Although the federal government has given the go-ahead to some Chilean fruit imports and has told consumers they have nothing to fear from apples, both scares have turned the produce market on its ear. Fruit prices are bouncing all over the lot.

Look for several weeks more before things settle. Some schools are still holding off putting apples back on the menu. A few health-care institutions have also dropped apples and apple products. Right now, apples are a good buy in most areas, because movement slowed after a consumer advocacy indictment was picked up by a major TV program, "60 Minutes."

Not all Chilean fruit was given an all-clear signal, so prices on peaches, especially, are up.

Look for imports to start picking up when the government figures out how to check for possible contamination. The Chilean government is working with ours to settle the problem quickly before more farmers go bankrupt.

Lettuce is doing its roller-coaster pricing ride about this time of the year. However, supplies are ample, with no major repeat of last year's white-fly infestation. Expect shipper FOB prices to run between below breakeven to about normal seasonal highs. No big surprises expected there. . . . Fresh broccoli prices are still down, with shippers still threatening to plow under part of the crop to jack up their returns. But competition is still fierce.

— Patt Patterson

TRENDS

Does country music drive you to drink?



Customers drink faster when the songs are sadder. A University of Minneapolis researcher studied behavior in bars in Missoula, Mont., and Minneapolis and found people drinking faster to "wailing, lonesome, self-pitying music."

The report labels country and Western music "a prescription for trouble among people with little self-control." While the study found hard drinkers preferred slow, sad music and drink more when the songs of Willie Nelson and Waylon Jennings are played, it said rock music did not have the same effect.

NY will put DWI controls in cars of drunk drivers

New York state has ordered another weapon against drunk drivers, mini-breathalyzers, which prevent cars from starting when the driver's blood-alcohol exceeds the legal limit. Beginning April 1, judges can order convicted drunk drivers to install the \$500 alcohol-detecting devices in their cars.

The law carries strict penalties for drivers who try to circumvent the breathalyzer by allowing sober friends to breathe in it or by tampering with the device.

One man's light beer is another's problem

According to surveys conducted for Miller Brewing, customers expect light beers to have about one-third fewer calories than do standard beers. Armed with such data, Miller is asking the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco & Firearms to reconsider its current proposal of a 20-percent difference.

Miller Lite is on the 33-percent-lighter mark. Other breweries that are heavier are fighting the proposal. No decision is expected until later this year.

Vodka & Tonic favorite among top US drinks

Vodka and tonic, gin and tonic, and the margarita are the nation's top three drinks, according to research conducted for the House of Seagram. The survey, conducted in July 1988, shows

the margarita taking advantage of increased summer demand to move up from sixth position in a January survey.

Gin and tonic, fourth in the winter survey, showing increased popularity among Eastern consumers, replaced rum and Coke, which slipped to seventh place. Scotch and water, seventh in the January survey, moved into fifth position and the vodka martini, eighth in the winter, was the fifth-most-called-for drink in the summer survey.

On a geographical basis, vodka and tonic is tops across the country, except in the South and South Central regions, where the margarita is No. 1. Sales of the vodka martini have increased in every region.

On a demographic basis, blacks' acceptance of scotch and water appears to have increased. Younger consumers, those under 35 years old, favor the Screwdriver and rum and Coke.

While spirits slump, vodka continues strong

Vodka was the one category among spirits that showed a sales increase since Bar Management's 1987 survey. While the brown goods category slumped, 31 percent of establishments surveyed in June reported an increase in vodka sales.

Bar Management's survey of multiunit operations found the domestic leader, Smirnoff, to be

the most favored label in premium wells. Approximately 45 percent of chain respondents reported serving the American brand as part of their quality pour program. Stolichnaya remained the favorite among imports, turning up in 18 percent of units reporting, followed by Absolut, which was reported as a well brand by 11 percent of respondents.

BRANDS OF VODKA KEPT IN THE PREMIUM WELL

Brand Name	Total Chains	Dinner House	White Tablecloth	Family Rest./ Coffee Shop	Hotel/ Motel
Smirnoff	45%	54%	56%	—	36%
Stolichnaya	18%	23%	11%	50%	14%
Absolut	8%	8%	11%	—	7%
Gordon's	11%	8%	—	—	21%
Gilbey's	3%	—	11%	—	—
Finlandia	5%	—	—	50%	7%
All Other Single Mentions	8%	8%	11%	—	7%
No Premium Brand Mentioned	8%	15%	—	—	7%

Note: Percentages exceed 100 percent owing to multiple responses.
Source: NRN research

FOCUS | OPINION

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The ultimate victim: The 'little guy'

With all the furor about pending passage of a minimum-wage bill, one essential fact seems to have been neglected: It is not the food-service chains and independent groups that will suffer so much, but rather the small independent, which will be forced to the wall or over the brink.

Mandated health benefits, parental-leave legislation, and plans to trim the business-meal tax deduction from 80 percent

Editor's Corner

Charles Bernstein



to 50 percent also would sock it to the independent restaurant.

Mounds of red-tape paperwork, the blatantly unfair FICA tax

on tips, uncontrollable expenses, and rapidly shrinking profit margins are already killing the "little guy."

Severe casualties are mounting among individual restaurants that can't spread their costs among multiple units and are hard-hit by competitive pressures. Their escalating labor, food, and occupancy costs are creating a tremendous burden, and only those capable of generating annual sales in at least the \$1 million range can reasonably hope to survive in major competitive areas.

The mortality rate in large cities has been horrendous. But if the current legislation passes, the burden will be much greater and more little guys will fall.

Some maintain that it doesn't matter. Yet these little guys, in the small towns as well as in the cities, are the lifeblood of the industry and represent at least half of the nation's 500,000 restaurants.

Presumably, larger operators could absorb a rise in the minimum wage and the enactment of mandatory health-care legislation. But the smaller ones would find the increased costs untenable.

With wage scales pushed up, independents would be forced to cut jobs and raise menu prices to keep pace with skyrocketing expenses. For many of these places, the results may well be lower customer counts and extinction.

The federal minimum wage has remained at \$3.35 an hour for eight years, and a wage increase of some sort is inevitable and perhaps necessary. Still, it does not have to be the \$1.30-an-hour rise, to \$4.65, that the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee has recommended be adopted in stages over a three-year period.

Such a package certainly should include provisions to maintain a \$3.35 wage for less skilled workers who could be trained over a six-month or one-year period.

The Senate committee version appears likely to pass in some form in Congress, while President Bush and Labor Secretary

Elizabeth Dole's plan to raise the minimum wage in small stages to only \$4.25 an hour over a three-year period and to institute a \$3.35-an-hour "training" wage appears doomed.

Yet the political reality that Congress might not be able to override a threatened Bush veto by a necessary two-thirds majority could bring about some sort of compromise on the Senate bill.

Meanwhile, it is overwhelmingly critical that the current 40-percent tip credit be raised in any minimum-wage legislation. It really should be 100 percent, in view of the vast inconsistencies in the FICA tax on tips. Realistically, a 50-percent or even 60 percent tip credit might pass.

Independents don't have to stand by and let all this happen. They can fight against the proposed legislation and explain to their congressmen how devastating the situation is.

As Tom Kershaw, owner of the Hampshire House restaurant in Boston, put it recently: "If we don't fight for the right to operate this business, before long we could wake up wondering what happened to fine dining. Independents have to get involved in the political process, or they [the government] will take our business away from us. We have to tell them what we can live with. We have the numbers — if we can mobilize them."

Independents are especially vulnerable because they tend to be individualists who find it difficult to take a united front on anything. In this case it is imperative that they stand together.

The Senate's minimum-wage proposal would increase the business exemption from a \$362,500 volume to \$500,000. But it is hard to imagine any restaurants surviving today with less than a \$500,000 volume.

At the same time independents can least afford mandatory health-care or parental-leave benefits. If the government would turn its attention to helping provide desperately needed child-care facilities, that might somehow prove an acceptable substitute for the parental-leave benefits that may bankrupt small independents.

Finally, the Congressional Budget Office has drafted tentative plans to knock down the 80-percent business-meal tax deduction — which was chopped from 100 percent two years ago — to 50 percent. The CBO estimates this could yield as much as \$3 billion in extra annual tax revenues. In the process, independents that rely on business people would be dealt a knock-out blow again.

While larger food-service operators are the ones generally spearheading efforts against the reprehensible legislation, it is the little guy who would be drastically sliced down. And everyone — even senators and representatives — supposedly likes the little guy.

It must be impressed on Congress that much of the proposed legislation would ruin the same little guys that Congress says it is protecting. This is literally a life-or-death struggle for independent operators.

LETTERS

Remember: Little things add up to great service

Editor, NRN:

Your Editor's Corner column on service again was right on target.

Service! Service! Service! Service! Service! Service! Service! Service! Service!

Friendly, courteous, smiling, happy, "Give 'em the Pickle," refill your water, how are you, thanks again, I'll be back, speedy, personality, timely, outstanding, caring, would you like more coffee, professional, sharp, knowledgeable, how about dessert, tentative, willing, positive attitude, upbeat, efficient, how was dinner, satisfaction, loyal, I'll be happy to get that for you, hot food, pleasant, clean, responsive, alert, cooperative, sincere, customer is always right, never say "You're wrong," be creative, expedient, energetic, decisive, accurate, impeccable, nice, comforting, relaxing, lemon in the water, mints after every meal, go the extra mile, giving, standards are non-negotiable, be a right-now manager, move, effective, your ev-

ery need is met, pleasing, cream or sugar, eager, favorable, hot and fresh, trusting, compassionate, honest, integrity, above board, wholesome.

— **Robert E. Farrell**
chairman

Newport Bay Restaurant
Portland, Ore.

Employment of disabled is rewarding for all

Editor, NRN:

I was pleased to read your article on the employment of the disabled in our industry. Canteen Co. has long recognized this untapped employment resource. Just a few months ago, we received the "Employer of the Year" award from the National Rehabilitation Association for being the company that has done the most to provide employment opportunities for handicapped individuals on a national basis. Our experience with the disabled has been most salutary and rewarding.

— **Lawrence F. Wilkas**
vice president

Canteen Co.
Div. of TW Services Inc.
Chicago

'Outside' success stories can benefit the industry

Editor, NRN:

Your Editor's Corner highlights more than just Wal-Mart as a model of employee motivation and service. It also demonstrates the merit of looking beyond the food-service industry to find success stories.

Our industry is too often myopic in the view that it takes of the universe. Indeed, it fails to study and learn about ideas in retailing and other service industries and even manufacturing, ideas that might be applicable to our own businesses.

Thanks, Charles, for recognizing that we all can benefit from a wider view of the business world.

— **Max Pine**
president
Restaurant Associates
New York, N.Y.